



RESOLUTION

URGING THE CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO SUPPORT THE FILIPINO VETERANS FAMILY REUNIFICATION ACT TO EXPEDITE FAMILY REUNIFICATION FOR CERTAIN FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

WHEREAS, on December 8, 1941, thousands of Filipino men and women responded to President Roosevelt's call for help to preserve peace, democracy, and freedom for America and the world; and

WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines was a commonwealth associated with the United States and its citizens were nationals of the United States, similar to the status of Hawaii's residents prior to statehood and the current status of American Samoa's residents; and

WHEREAS, during the dark days of World War II, nearly 100,000 soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army provided a ray of hope in the Pacific as they fought alongside United States and Allied forces for four long years to defend and reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japanese aggression; and

WHEREAS, thousands more Filipinos joined the United States Armed Forces immediately after the war and served in occupational duty throughout the Pacific theater; and

WHEREAS, valiant Filipino soldiers fought, died, and suffered in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II, defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of Filipino prisoners of war endured the infamous Bataan Death March and years of captivity; and

WHEREAS, their many guerrilla actions slowed the Japanese takeover of the Western Pacific region and allowed United States forces the time to build and prepare for the allied counterattack on Japanese forces; and

WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side by side with American forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from which the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and

WHEREAS, in February of 1946, Congress enacted the 1946 Rescission Act, which denied World War II Filipino veterans rights to veterans benefits equal to those enjoyed by other veterans and soldiers of more than sixty-six other countries who were similarly inducted into the United States military; and



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WHEREAS the Rescission Act discriminated against Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for denial of full United States veterans status and benefits, including rights of immigration and naturalization; and

WHEREAS, decades later, in recognition of the courage and loyalty of the Filipino troops who fought alongside our armed forces in the Pacific during World War II, the United States Congress enacted legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from certain immigration and naturalization requirements for these Filipino veterans; and

WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of this country; and

WHEREAS, despite the granting of citizenship, these World War II Filipino veterans are still denied equal treatment and status as American veterans by the Rescission Act; and

WHEREAS, the 1990 legislation did not go far enough in extending those immigration and naturalization benefits to the children of those veterans, resulting in years of long separation between the veterans and their children remaining in the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 2116, known as the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, introduced by Representative Mazie Hirono and cosponsored by Representative Colleen W. Hanabusa, and pending in Congress, proposes to exempt children of certain Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitations on immigrant visas; and

WHEREAS, the council has previously approved Resolutions 07-44, CD1, 08-113, 10-8, and 10-46 urging the President and the Congress to support and pass federal legislation that would confer certain benefits on Filipino veterans of World War II and their families; and

WHEREAS, the council finds that passage of H.R. 2116 will provide the benefit of exemption from numerical limitations on immigrant visas to children of certain Filipino World War II veterans; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the United States Congress and the President to support and pass H.R. 2116, the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, exempting children of Filipino World War II veterans from numerical limitations on immigrant visas, or similar legislation; and



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 11-206

RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of Hawaii's delegation to the Congress of the United States.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tom Bono

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 22 2011

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers